



NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection
and
Wisconsin Pork Association



DATCP, Pork Association partner on 'Passion for Pork' initiative

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Media Contacts:

[Keri Retallick](#), Wisconsin Pork Association Executive Vice President, (608) 778-7250

[Rick Hummell](#), DATCP Public Information Officer, (608) 224-5041

MADISON – The Wisconsin Pork Association (WPA) and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) have joined forces to start a new program connecting Wisconsin pork producers to local meat processors, consumers and the growing number of people experiencing food insecurity during COVID-19.

Through the program, called “Passion for Pork,” WPA and DATCP are connecting Wisconsin pork producers with smaller, local meat processors who are extending their hours of operation to process and package the pork to help meet the growing demand for food bank and food pantry resources. Wisconsin food banks are getting the pork into the hands of those in need.

“Due to current market challenges and supply chain disruptions brought on by COVID-19, the Wisconsin Pork Association is pleased to partner with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and local meat processors to create a new destination for pork that might otherwise go to waste,” said Keri Retallick, WPA executive vice president. “The program is a win-win for pork producers, processors and consumers alike.”

“We are glad to join with the Wisconsin Pork Association to help them get Wisconsin pork to consumers in need,” said DATCP Interim Secretary Randy Romanski. “This is another great example of the positive impact we can have when we connect the dots between Wisconsin producers, processors and consumers.”

The program kicked off earlier this week with the delivery of 60 hogs for harvest to People’s Meat Market, a local meat processor and program member in Stevens Point. The whole hog carcass is then broken down into smaller portions for further processing and packaging at Windsor-based Neesvig’s Meats, another program member. Along with shipping the processed pork to food banks and food pantries, the local meat processors also sell the pork at their retail stores. Additionally, Neesvig’s hopes to offer pick up of various products at several different sites including their processing plant in Windsor in the next few weeks.

The hogs for “Passion for Pork” are being supplied by Wisconsin pig farmers, however, there are significant costs associated with the processing, storage, and delivery of the pork to food banks and pantries. WPA is currently accepting donations from the public to support the continued operation of this program. (In compliance with Wisconsin law, DATCP is neither soliciting nor accepting contributions on behalf of WPA.)

Donations to the Passion for Pork can be mailed to:

Passion for Pork
c/o Peoples State Bank
P.O. Box 218
Bloomington, WI 53804

Or electronically at <https://donorbox.org/passion-for-pork>.

Wisconsin pig farmers and meat processors interested in participating in the program should email the Wisconsin Pork Association: wppa@wppa.org

Processing will continue for as long as processing capacity and funds remain. DATCP will continue to work with WPA and other agricultural groups to find ways to get Wisconsin commodities to consumers in need.

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